



TEAM REPORT OF FINDINGS FOR THE
MAINE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

University of Maine Presque Isle

Program Approval Visit for Educator Preparation Program
Presque Isle, Maine
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Introduction

This report is based upon a review of the self-study developed by the teacher education unit from the University of Maine Presque Isle, and from the data collected and reviewed during a site visit October 16 to October 19, 2016. The visiting team conducted interviews with faculty, administrators, college support staff, current students, alumni, and school professionals. Team members visited classes on campus, and observed student teachers in local schools. In addition to the self-study, team members reviewed documents made available to them in an online exhibit archive.

Overview and History

University of Maine at Presque Isle has been educating students for more than a century. The University was founded in 1903 as the Aroostook State Normal School by the Maine State Legislature following the work of dedicated citizens who saw the growing need for post-secondary education in central Aroostook County. The University has undergone four name changes since then and since 1971, it has been known as The University of Maine at Presque Isle. As a public institution, UMPI operates under the supervision of publicly appointed officials, and is supported primarily by public funds. UMPI is one of seven autonomous campuses within the University of Maine System.

The University provides 1,200 traditional and non-traditional students with life-changing opportunities in a caring, small-university environment. The University offers 22 Bachelor's Degree programs, which include 18 concentration options, as well as 7 Associate's Degree programs, 35 minors, and 5 Certificate programs. The University consists of three distinct colleges: the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Education, and the College of Professional Programs. All Colleges are linked by a core General Education Curriculum (GEC) developed in accordance with the goals of the University. The College of Education offers Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education (K-8), Secondary Education (7-12), and Physical Education (K-12).

The programs offered are:

- Elementary Education, BS – Art Concentration
- Elementary Education, BS – Early Childhood Education Concentration
- Elementary Education, BS – English Concentration
- Elementary Education, BS – Mathematics Concentration
- Elementary Education, BS – Science Concentration

- Elementary Education, BS – Social Studies Concentration
- Elementary Education, BS – Special Education Concentration
- Secondary Education – Biology, BS
- Secondary Education – English, BS
- Secondary Education – Mathematics, BS
- Secondary Education – Social Studies, BS
- Physical Education – Teaching, BS
- Special Education Paraprofessional, AA
- Minor Programs: Educational Studies

The College also provides an alternative route to certification programs for students who have earned a degree previously, and wish to earn initial certification in elementary or secondary schools. These students complete the entire professional education sequence and program requirements, as well as any core courses needed to become eligible in a teachable content. This takes about a year and half including summer courses; this is more popular for Canadian students and results in a second bachelor's degree.

In 2014 the University of Maine at Presque Isle became the first university in Maine and one of the first in the nation to deliver Proficiency-based education. Proficiency-based education (PBE) encourages deeper learning and greater engagement by providing more hands-on activities, giving students choices in selecting assignments, and having them demonstrate proficiency in a subject area before moving along to the next concept. UMPI's vision states that it will "design a personalized, technologically innovative education with every student and prepare each graduate to pursue a career, make global contributions, and engage in lifelong learning". To achieve its new vision, the University is incorporating proficiency-based education into all aspects of the campus experience. A two-year, \$197,946 grant UMPI was awarded by the Davis Educational Foundation, titled *Embracing Proficiency-Based Education* at UMPI, and is assisting the campus in providing in-depth faculty and staff training and development as it implements its new vision. It is also important to note that Proficiency-based education is the model of education used in the surrounding school districts and also in Canada. This review takes place a year into this model as Proficiency-based education (PBE) permeates the culture of the College of Education as well as the University as a whole.

I. Summary of the Unit's Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework establishes the shared vision for a unit's efforts in preparing educators to work effectively in P-12 schools. It provides direction for programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance, scholarship, service and unit accountability. The conceptual framework is knowledge-based, articulated, shared, coherent, consistent with the unit and/or institutional mission, and continuously evaluated. The conceptual framework provides the bases that describe the unit's intellectual philosophy, which distinguishes graduates of one unit from those of another.

Mission and Unit Conceptual Framework

The Conceptual Framework of the College of Education (CoE) is a shared set of beliefs and attitudes that serves as the foundation for the Teacher Education program and expectations for teacher candidates. It clearly identifies for faculty, staff, and students the core values that we share as a learning community. These core values, described below, are integrated into all CoE coursework, field experiences, and clinical experiences. The Conceptual Framework was re-envisioned and updated by faculty in 2015. This revision took place over a series of summer retreats where the department was committed to updating the framework to make sure that it was current and reflected the evolving beliefs and principles of the department.

The Conceptual Framework is embodied by a visual that places *Opportunity* in the middle. *Opportunity* is the key theme of the Conceptual Framework of the College of Education. It emphasizes the empowering and transformative role education plays in the lives of individuals and entire communities. Surrounding the theme of *Opportunity* are the other principles that are valued by the college:

- *Knowledge*: is the assimilation and accommodation of the various areas of study in becoming a teacher and an educated person. To achieve a depth of understanding requires the application of thinking processes such as scientific thinking, critical thinking, creative thinking and other forms of reasoning.
- *Reflection*: is an integral part of an academic and professional growth. Being a reflective thinker implies a willingness to review, reexamine, evaluate and rethink educational concepts, processes, and practices.
- *Dispositions*: are the academic and professional attitudes, values, and beliefs which are demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, and colleagues. In addition to assessing content knowledge and pedagogical skills of pre-service teachers, the CoE identifies, evaluates, and develops students' attitudinal behaviors, or dispositions.
- *Diversity*: includes the importance of designing and implementing curricula that support students' appreciation of social justice, awareness and acceptance of differences among people based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area.
- *Instructional Strategies*: are emphasized in the College of Education (COE) reflect the current art and science of pedagogy. COE faculty employs research-based and data-

informed practices in varied classroom settings and with diverse student populations. They are intended to facilitate students' progress and educational success.

This Conceptual Framework permeates many parts of the program such as:

- *Syllabi*: All syllabi include the Conceptual Framework.
- *Public Display*: The framework is displayed in classrooms and on the walls
- *Courses*: Students are introduced to the Conceptual Framework in EDU 152, Introduction to Education. The students have an assignment based on this framework. It is also a Student Learning Objective that is in the coursework (SLO).
- *Portfolio*: Students have the framework in their Portfolio and reflect upon how this framework roots their learning in the program.
- *Alignment*: There is a matrix that is used in the program that crosswalks the teaching standards with the conceptual framework.

Summary

The Conceptual Framework is very much alive in many facets of the program. The framework clearly aligns with the eleven teacher standards and represents the current beliefs of the department especially as it aligns with proficiency based education. There is strong supporting material for the Conceptual Framework—each principle has a short description, relating quote, definition, and description of why that principle relates to the overall theme of the conceptual framework. In the 2012 review there was a recommendation that the college provide stronger theories and evidence of a solid knowledge base for this framework. It is evident that the College has taken on this task to create a framework that embodies their core beliefs, has been thoughtfully developed, and plays a strong role in the teaching and learning for their students.

II. Summary Findings for Each Standard

Standard One: Initial Teacher Candidate Performance

Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other professional school personnel know and demonstrate the content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

A. Rationale for the Decision/Recommendations.

Standard One seeks to ensure that the candidates demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to be effective teachers. To this end, an examination was made of the alignment of the degrees and certification requirements with *Maine's Common Core Teaching Standards*.

UMPI's 2015 Title II Report states that candidates participate in a minimum of 156 hours of supervised field work prior to student teaching but this is generally not supervised by UMPI faculty, with the exception of the 45 hour internship that takes place the semester before student teaching. Candidates must maintain a GPA of 2.5 in general education courses to demonstrate knowledge of content and a 3.0 GPA in their major. Successful completion of professional education courses and passage of PRAXIS exams demonstrate mastery of the remainder of *Maine's Common Core Teaching Standards* (includes revised *Interstate Teacher Assessment Consortium (InTASC) Standards* and the *National Education Technology Standards for Teachers (NETS-T)*).

UMPI has instituted a proficiency based system that is called Personalized Learning. There are multiple sets of outcomes, including General Learning Outcomes (GLOs), Professional Learning Outcomes (PLOs), and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Students are required to meet all outcomes in order to graduate. This system provides evidence of student mastery of all of *Maine's Common Core Teaching Standards*. The summative measure of the mastery of standards occurs at the conclusion of the program in student teaching evaluations and in the e-portfolio. Each standard is assessed with a self-assessment, cooperating teacher assessment, and faculty supervisor assessment. The portfolio is accumulated throughout the program but at this time is created in the last year of the program.

The implementation of the Proficiency-Based System is still in the beginning stages although a great deal of work is evident from syllabi and interviews. There has been extensive professional development for faculty and staff over the past few years. The components of a proficiency-based system in place are the assessment system, some student voice and choice, and assessment by self, faculty, and cooperating teachers. Components not yet in place include movement based on performance, learning taking place anytime or anywhere, and students moving at their own pace.

Current students indicated that they were still learning about the system. They liked the fact that they could re-submit assignments but one indicated that having to perform in a set number of formative assessments could be “tedious.” Another student indicated that the TK-20 system seemed repetitive. Cooperating teachers and candidates indicated that they had not received training in the TK-20 system.

Disposition assessments are conducted in each education course and in the internship and student teaching experiences. These assessments are beginning to be used in earlier field experiences as well.

Candidates are required to take courses in the General Education Curriculum (GEC) to solidify content knowledge. They have flexibility in choosing their courses as long as they have at least three credits from each of five general education outcome areas. The University of Maine System limits degrees to 120 credits, and this program complies with that requirement. The curricula meet the requirements of state certification and have been designed to provide candidates with the requisite skills and knowledge needed for teaching in their respective fields.

Although there is no formal preparation for the Praxis exams, the Professional Advisor facilitates registration for students and provides them with study materials. Students organize study groups on their own to work together. Small classes enhance the capability of faculty to address individual needs of candidates. Although the Professional Advisor stated that there was an 86% first-time passage rate for the Praxis Core, no evidence was available regarding passage rates for Praxis Core or Praxis II.

Maine’s Common Core Teaching Standards are embedded in the curriculum as evidenced by the Education course syllabi. Every course has been mapped to make sure there is adequate coverage of all standards. A mapping of the entire program is planned. All syllabi indicate standards alignment. Exit interviews are scheduled at the end of freshman year and the end of seventh semester during which students must present and defend their portfolio to the faculty.

Summary

Based upon multiple conversations with groups of candidates and alumni, the Review Team found ample evidence that students are developing familiarity with *Maine’s Common Core Teaching Standards*. All candidates indicated a clear understanding of the philosophy of teaching and key ideas expressed in the Conceptual Framework including the importance of differentiation, student engagement, and reflective practice. Students indicated that in the past two years there has been a significant effort in familiarizing students with the Conceptual Framework. The program also has done a great job creating a framework to track progress of students throughout the program.

B. Recommendations

1. UMPI education faculty should determine the reliability and validity of student teacher evaluations by developing common language to insure that standards are being met.
2. UMPI should continue to explore ways to implement the additional components of a proficiency-based system including movement based on performance, learning taking place anytime or anywhere, and students moving at their own pace.

C. Commendations

1. UMPI has demonstrated innovation and vision in implementing the beginning stages of a proficiency-based system.
2. UMPI graduates are immersed and well-versed in the methodology of PBE upon graduation, and therefore ready to enter teaching assignments with this understanding and ability.
3. The evidence that UMPI faculty are in engaging in a cycle of continuous improvement is noteworthy.
4. Based on evidence of frequent evaluation of dispositions, first year and last year interviews and candidates comments, UMPI excels in helping students develop professional dispositions.

D. Review Team Decision.

This Standard is MET

Standard Two: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation

The unit has an assessment system that collects and analyzes data on the qualifications of applicants, the performance of candidates and graduates, and on unit operations to evaluate and improve the unit and its programs.

A. Rationale for the Decision/Recommendations.

The UMPI College of Education (COE) prefaces their self-study with a quote “*the preparation of educators cannot be a static process in an ever-changing environment.*” This statement could be applied to the role that assessment plays across the COE. There are several references in the self-study to “*changes, and a shift and/or redesign of a comprehensive assessment system*”, which is understandable given that the College continues to define and model Proficiency Based Education (PBE) at the University level. Metaphorically speaking, it can be said that the faculty and administration are endeavoring to construct the PBE ‘boat’ while also navigating the vessel at full sail. This reflects a major paradigmatic shift in all aspects of assessment practice for the institutional administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Evidence reveals that over the past two years the COE faculty and administration have dedicated numerous hours to the development of a “*well considered and detailed process for collecting assessment data for analysis and application.*” Interviews with faculty, administrators, and students confirm that this process has led to substantial change in the ways in which assessment has been articulated by both formative and summative measures; collected by tools like Blackboard and TK-20; and defined by the demonstrating of proficiency in 21st century skills, content knowledge, and professional dispositions.

Interviews with unit administrators and faculty confirm that there has been significant allocation of time spent to delineate skills, content, and dispositions as distinct areas for assessment across the COE program offerings.

Evidence in the form of syllabi, and interviews with administration, faculty, and professional advising staff confirm that there is a commitment to providing a clear articulation of the unit’s Conceptual Framework, Program Learning Objectives (Maine Initial Teaching Standards), and SLO’s (Student Learning Objectives); however, due to the dynamic nature of the institutional undertaking, the GLO’s (General Learning Outcomes) are still being integrated across all COE syllabi.

There are multiple examples of differentiated assessment criteria across course syllabi, formative and summative assessment rubrics, and rubrics for professional dispositions, attitudes and/or actions.

Multiple rubrics are used across the unit that provides formative summative measures and professional dispositions. These rubrics serve as practical exemplars of detailed assessment

criteria that are aligned to outcome content objectives and are highlighted in course syllabi, the COE student handbook and the student teaching handbook.

There is a systematic approach to support student performance in the application of the professional disposition rubric which serves as a triangulation tool to support student performance. Evidence verifies that the professional dispositions rubric is standardized across courses and student proficiencies and /or lack of proficiencies are communicated by the course professor, faculty advisor, professional advisor, dean of the college, and to the student with the intention of providing focused early intervention to support student success.

There are specified benchmarks along the student's progression in the program which comprise interviews with the four full time faculty and a student portfolio defense. This meeting also serves as an opportunity for students to receive constructive feedback related to their progress in their program of study. Sources substantiate that these faculty interviews are designed to provide a reflective measure to assess growth in student proficiencies in their demonstration of 21st century skill attainment, content knowledge, and professional dispositions.

A professional advisor works collaboratively with faculty advisors and the Student Success Center staff to assist students in meeting program objectives, providing academic support services, tutoring, Praxis Core and Praxis II (Content) Examination preparation and registration, initial portfolio construction, and criminal background checks.

Interviews with faculty members, the professional advisor, and unit administration expressed a collaborative ethos that supports joint efforts to provide students with modeling professional behaviors, networking, instructional technology applications, and portfolio construction. One example is the "First Friday Seminars" that are mandatory for students and contribute to their professional development. In an effort to involve multi-year graduate alumni from the COE, one seminar has been dedicated to providing a forum discussion and network opportunity between UMPI alums who are educators and educational administrators in the County and current Education students.

Evidence verifies that the faculty are committed to allowing student "voice and choice" in both formative and summative assessments as students work towards demonstrating proficiencies with the stated PLO's, SLO's and some GLO's. A faculty member stated, "We want the students to feel safe to take academic risks." A student in the same faculty member's class affirmed that "we have effective professors who care about our success." This would seem to support the unit's self-study claim that personalized learning providing voice and choice assists their students in developing self-confidence.

Several sources affirmed the unit's dedication to continuous examination and revision for improvement in the areas of assessment data collection, analysis of that data, and the tracking of student performance as a priority. One significant example is the current development of a "one stop comprehensive assessment system," TK-20, which is being developed as a digital repository for multiple measures of student progress to include proficiency towards key assessments, portfolio construction, field observations from mentor teachers, college supervisors,

and student self- evaluations. The TK-20 system when fully implemented will also serve as a robust tool for the analysis of the unit’s assessment efforts and practices.

Further evidence indicates that the unit has adopted a faculty assessment measure that is providing a closer evaluation of student learning, used in place of a former standardized student evaluation at course end. The IDEA Student Rating Instructional System is designed to provide practical assessment data that can be used to inform teaching and serves as a customizable tool for faculty to examine the overall outcomes of their instruction within the unit’s programs of study.

As an example of the commitment to quality implementation of proficiency based assessment practices UMPI’s COE is an institutional member of the National Competency Based Education Network (C-Ben). It is these kinds of professional associations that faculty, staff and unit administrators identify as a valuable resource for unit improvement.

Findings during this review illustrate a dedication and an authentic enthusiasm by faculty, staff and unit administrator to a process of assessment that, according to the unit’s self- study “*is not complete*” but promotes and supports “*a belief in a dynamic and continuously improving program.*” Further evidence provides verification that the unit has an intentional, evolving, proficiency based assessment system that collects and analyzes data, tracks the performance of candidates and graduates, and utilizes measures that evaluate and improve the unit and its programs.

Summary

Evidence reveals that over the past two years the COE faculty and administration have dedicated numerous hours to the development of a “*well considered and detailed process for collecting assessment data for analysis and application.*” Interviews with faculty, administrators, and students confirm that this process has led to substantial change in the ways in which assessment has been articulated (formative and summative), collected (Blackboard, TK-20) and defined (application of 21st century skills, content knowledge and professional dispositions). Findings during this review illustrate a dedication and an authentic enthusiasm by faculty, staff and unit administrator to a process of assessment that, according to the unit’s self- study “*is not complete*” but promotes and supports “*a belief in a dynamic and continuously improving program.*” Further evidence provides verification that the unit has an intentional, evolving, proficiency based assessment system that collects and analyzes data, tracks the performance of candidates and graduates, and utilizes measures that evaluate and improve the unit and its programs.

B. Recommendations

1. The unit should continue their work on the clarification and cross-walking of the relationship between PLO’s (Program Learning Outcomes), GLO’s (General Learning Outcomes), and SLO’s (Student Learning Outcomes) in a clear and consistent manner, so that faculty, staff, and students can articulate these distinctions across appropriate assessment data.

2. The unit should continue the work of further developing the capacity of TK-20 to facilitate the identification in a ‘one stop fashion’ of collected assessment data for the analysis of student performance, curriculum revision, program review and alignment of the stated PLO’s, GLO’s and SLO’s, to include planned key assessments and portfolio construction. In addition TK-20 training (including professional development, conferences and cross institutional networking) should be made a priority for faculty, staff, students, and cooperating teachers.

C. Commendations

1. The unit is to be commended for demonstrating a high degree of cross institutional collaboration in the initial establishment and continuing work of articulating the assessment tools and methods for Proficiency Based Education both within the COE, across the larger institution, and with school communities.
2. The unit is to be commended on the dedicated time and substantial effort that has been put forth in embracing a strong focus upon not only the importance of *professional dispositions* in teacher preparation but also in the modeling and active demonstration of Proficiency Based Educational Practices.

D. Review Team Decision.

This Standard is *MET*

Standard Three: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

The unit and its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school personnel develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to help all students learn.

A. Rationale for the Decision/Recommendations.

The Education program at the University of Maine at Presque Isle (UMPI) prepares students for careers in Elementary Education (K-8), Secondary Education (7-12), and Physical Education (K-12). Candidates in Elementary and Secondary Education are required to declare a concentration.

Undergraduate field placements start in the first semester of a candidate's first year (EDU 152) where they spend 2 hours per week in community-based after-school programs. All candidates are in a variety of field placements during their program. They have 156 hours of supervised field work before Student Teaching; with 40 contact hours in the first year, 70 in the second and third years throughout the methods courses, 45 hours in the first half of the fourth year, and 15 weeks or about 450 hours during student teaching in the second half of the fourth year.

Placements for Student Teaching and Practicum courses are arranged through the Director of Student Teaching and Field Experience. Field experiences within methods courses are arranged by individual students. The Director serves on the Central Aroostook Council of Education (CACE) In-service Committee and has frequent contact and routine interactions with principals and curriculum coordinators from partnering schools to know which schools are able to support field experiences and, additionally, to coordinate a "good fit" for students as well as to provide diversity across placements. Students seeking a placement provide a request for placement which includes their demographic information and a brief description of the course and its field experience requirement. They can also request a specific location of placement.

UMPI is the first public university to offer proficiency-based education, thus candidates have a unique educational experience that will allow them to step into public school teaching with that knowledge and experience. All education courses are geared to promoting the skills and knowledge needed to teach in schools that are using or working to make the transition to PBE.

The Director of Student Teaching and Field Experience has created numerous positive relationships with surrounding schools and districts to assist students' professional development. Annual meetings are convened between the principals and the Director of Student Teaching and Field Experience to ensure open communication and a sense of community and collaboration. During visits to programs and schools, the Director of Student Teaching and Field Experience was able to brief us about the administrators, program structure, and program philosophies. Furthermore, when we entered programs, administrators greeted the Director of Student Teaching and Field Experience by name and often took that time to do a quick check in.

Field Experiences occur across the program. Typically field experiences progress in the following manner:

First Year Experiences

UMPI has, in an effort increase the amount of time and numbers of opportunities for students to be in public school classrooms and situations early in their programs, partnered with two after school programs. Students are assigned placement in both of their first two semesters (EDU 152 & EDU 153), one in the MSAD 45- Washburn 21st Century Afterschool Program, and the other at the Wintergreen Arts Center. UMPI believes that the mission and goals of these partnering organizations are a strong match with their own, and with many program learning outcomes (PLOs). Each of these field experiences is 2-hour per week for the semester for a total 40 hours within the candidate's first year. These experiences allow UMPI students to work in school-like settings, engage with a variety of ages of children, observe and work with classroom teachers, work as part of a collaborative team, and design and implement individualized plans in literacy, mathematics, cooking, physical activity, STEM, and more.

Second and Third Year Experiences

Nearly every course in the required professional education sequence has an observation component built in ranging from 3-12 hours for a total of 70 contact hours within the second and third years of the program. These observations enable candidates to explore classrooms and schools from different angles and perspectives. As evidenced in the self-study and through interviews with faculty, students, and school personnel these experiences are aligned with the Unit's conceptual framework, SLOs and PLOs.

Fourth Year Experiences

EDU 395 Practicum in Education: In the semester before student teaching, candidates are placed with a teacher in their intended area of certification for a minimum of 3-hours per week for the semester for a total of 45 hours. Candidates conduct observations focused on 8 lenses of effective teaching while engaging in classroom activities as assigned by the cooperating teacher. In addition, they plan a mini-unit consisting of three lessons which they teach, assess, and reflect on. One of these lessons has a formal observation by a faculty member or the Director of Student Teaching.

EDU 395 Practicum in Education Year-long Internship (option 2): Candidates can apply and interview for admission to this option. In this option, candidates spend the week before school starts in September assisting the cooperating teacher in preparation for the school year. They then spend the first day of school and one day each week during the semester for a total of 100+ hours. At the end of the semester the candidate transitions into EDU 495-Student Teaching with the same cooperating teacher and classroom.

EDU 495 Student Teaching: This involves 15 weeks with UMPI students typically placed in two different aged classrooms in two different schools; one for 7 weeks and then one for 8 weeks. Elementary and Physical Education majors are placed in one upper grade and one lower grade teaching experience. During each placement, candidates complete a self-assessment and provide artifacts that demonstrate evidence of each of the program learning outcomes and the dispositions statements at the midpoint and again at the end. The Supervisor and mentor teacher also complete an assessment and provide narrative commentary to support each score given.

EDU 490 The Capstone: The capstone is paired with the Student Teaching and provides candidates the opportunity to share, problem solve, ask questions, get feedback, and complete their professional portfolios.

Summary

Overall, candidates at the University of Maine at Presque Isle gain a well-rounded experience teaching, working, and observing in schools and local child-centered programs. The candidates reflect on their experiences and can link the theory they learn in their course work to experience they see and participate in within their field experiences. Candidates articulated that they felt comfortable in their knowledge, had the tools and strategies needed to support student learning, were ready and excited to engage with students, and were supported by faculty and peers throughout their program. UMPI's focus on field experiences is evident throughout all programs leading to initial certification.

B. Recommendations

1. The team recommends that field experiences provide more opportunities for candidates to engage in teaching and that teaching opportunities include observations, assessment of teaching skills, and feedback by faculty or cooperating teachers to grow and support Candidates' teaching practices.
2. The team recommends that the unit explore ways to differentiate first year field experiences by major.

C. Commendations.

1. The review team was very impressed with the following aspects of field experiences:
 - The depth and breadth of field experiences in the first year.
 - The connection between fieldwork and methods classes.

D. Review Team Decision.

This Standard is MET

Standard Four: Diversity

The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and experiences for candidates to acquire and apply the knowledge and skills necessary to help all students learn. These experiences include working with diverse higher education and school faculty, diverse candidates, and diverse students in P-12 schools.

A. Rationale for the Decision/Recommendations.

The demographics of the student population at the University of Maine at Presque Isle tend to mirror the somewhat homogenous population of Aroostook County. The percentage of Native American students on campus, however, is double the percentage of Native Americans in Aroostook County. Efforts are ongoing to attract a more diverse student body through athletic recruitment, an increased effort for out-of-state applicants to the university, and international partnerships.

A closer inspection of the diversity on the UMPI campus plays out largely with 1) first generation students in higher education, 2) low income students, 3) non-traditional aged students, 4) Native Americans, and 5) online students. There is a specific mentoring program for first generation students. Activities surrounding Convocation work to build and strengthen communities across the spectrum of the student population. Faculty Professional Development provides for diversity training that can be used with the student population. Education foundation courses, methods courses, technology in the classroom courses, and field experiences embed differentiation and issues of diversity into the learning. The commitment to diversity is also on display in the campus life with specific residential life programming in diversity and through various campus activities and clubs.

Students in their first year have two field placements that work specifically with diverse populations. The 21st Century Afterschool Program (ASP) at MSAD #45 opens the UMPI students to working with low performing elementary and middle school students in an area of high rural poverty. The students spend two hours per week for a full semester working with students primarily in math and reading. A first-year student with a placement at ASP, responded to a question about her exposure to diversity thus far in her university experience replied, “Oh my, it plays out here (ASP). There are lots of different learning styles and certainly different needs.” The second first-year placement is with the Wintergreen Arts program. This is an early childhood education program in the arts primarily focused on homeschooled students.

The local schools in Aroostook County and nearby Eastern New Brunswick, Canada, where candidates typically conduct their field experiences, have high populations of socio-economically disadvantaged students. By far, this is the largest category of diversity that UMPI students encounter. In addition, the schools include students from the Native American nations of the Maliseets and Micmacs, and the First Nation Maliseets from the Tobique Reserve in New Brunswick. According to www.census.gov/quickfacts, children under age 18 comprise less than 25% of the population of Aroostook County. Fully 95.4% of the population is white, and only

1.9% is Native American. The median household income is just over \$37,000, and the percentage of persons living in poverty is 20%, as compared to the national level of 15%.

One of the five dimensions of the Conceptual Framework of the College of Education at UMPI is diversity. “The CoE recognizes the importance of designing and implementing curricula that support students’ appreciation of social justice, awareness and acceptance of differences among people based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area” (Self Study, 2016, p. 9). Interviews of students reveal that the topic of diversity is in the forefront of education courses. A current UMPI student who is student teaching said that “whenever I think of anything about education I automatically think of diversity; that’s how much it is a part of our program.” Accommodations and modifications to meet the needs of all learners are a part of every student-crafted lesson plan in methods courses and field experiences.

Summary

One of the five dimensions of the Conceptual Framework of the College of Education at UMPI is diversity. Education foundation courses, methods courses, technology in the classroom courses, and field experiences embed differentiation and issues of diversity into the learning. The commitment to diversity is also on display in the campus life with specific residential life programming in diversity and through various campus activities and clubs. Interviews of students reveal that the topic of diversity is in the forefront of education courses. Students in their first year have two field placements that work specifically with diverse populations.

B. Recommendations.

1. The elementary education programs and the secondary education programs have a requirement of SOC 100 Introduction to Sociology as part of their General Education Curriculum (GEC) Requirements. The team recommends that this course is added as a required GEC course to the Physical Education program to insure that all students are exposed to the foundations of diversity.

C. Commendations.

NONE

D. Review Team Decision.

This Standard is *MET*

Standard Five: Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development

Faculty are qualified and model best professional practices in scholarship, service, and teaching, including the assessment of their own effectiveness as related to candidate performance; they also collaborate with colleagues in the disciplines and schools. The unit systematically evaluates faculty performance and facilitates professional development.

A. Rationale for the Decision/Recommendations.

Qualified Faculty

The University of Maine, Presque Isle faculty are a small but cohesive group. The makeup of the faculty is diverse with a range of backgrounds and content area expertise. There are six full time lines allocated to the College—two Associate Professors, two Assistant Professors, one lecturer in Physical Education and one Director of Student Teaching and Field Experiences. The two Associate Professors have their terminal degrees and the Assistant Professors are both currently working on their doctorate degrees. It is important to note that these faculty lines are considerably down from the 16 faculty lines a decade ago which has reflected the decrease in enrollment in the College. There are several instructors that have assignments in the College of Education as well. The faculty is uniformly reported as very high touch and personal. Students sing the praises of the faculty, the students claim that their professors know them, help them and always have an open door for them.

The full time faculty in the College have a very heavy teaching load. Full time faculty carry 12 credits per term which is approximately 4 courses in a semester. Full time faculty also do overloads, supervision of student teachers, and load release for administrative duties. The full time faculty members are very busy. Faculty are stretched very thin (advising, teaching, community outreach) as the department has approximately 200 students overall. While approximately 60% of courses are taught by full time faculty, the College also relies heavily on adjuncts. The decisions on who to hire as an adjunct as well as what classes are assigned to adjuncts seem to be very deliberate and intentional. The college faculty look at the courses that they teach under two categories—there are theoretical/foundational courses and clinical/methods courses. The College has made a conscious decision to use adjuncts for their clinical courses (methods courses). Their rationale is that practicing teachers who are closer to K-12 teaching are better suited to teach the courses that are rooted in practice. These adjuncts can share real experiences, bring students into their classrooms, and provide the context that students need to be prepared to go into classrooms. This was echoed by students as they also believed that the adjuncts were preparing them for the classroom. Students cited that in their methods classes they were never sitting and listening to lecturers but rather participating in hands on activities and demonstration lessons that gave them the feel of what it meant to be a teacher. Full time faculty tends to be assigned to more of the foundational courses. Faculty asserted that it was their job to provide the solid roots for students, to challenge the students, and give the student the background that will carry through their education courses.

Modeling Best Professional Practices in Teaching

Students uniformly report that their professors model best practices in their teaching. For example, students attested to the fact that faculty practice what they preach. This might mean

using multiple forms of technology in their classes (such as Google Hangouts, Zoom, Kahoot, iPads), showing them what a Proficiency-based teaching looks like by teaching through the PBE model, bringing manipulatives into class to engage the students in active inquiry and demonstrating how important it is to connect to students and build strong relationships. Professors are seen as powerful role models, staying current on best practice, not afraid to try new things and be seen as risk takers. One former student said specifically that her professor “gave us his life experiences and made me into the teacher I am today”. This embodies the feeling that many of the students have about faculty.

In addition to modeling best practices in their classrooms, faculty also serves as Faculty Advisors to students. Each education student is assigned two advisors—a professional advisor and a faculty advisor. The professional advisor deals with scheduling and more technical aspects of a student's progression through completion while the faculty advisor primarily works with each student to support his/her growth through the curricular and professional aspects of their program. For example, a faculty advisor focuses on student learning and growth in education. They work with students around developing portfolios, talk to them about the conceptual framework and help them choose TK20 artifacts. Students are assigned to faculty advisors based on content interest, and faculty advisors can have anywhere between 30-50 advisees. The University also is committed to supporting excellence in teaching and recently has hired an additional Instructional Designer who can support professional development around teaching.

It is very important to this faculty to stay current and be reflective of educational trends and the needs of the larger community. Professors are using lots of technology such as videos, Kahoot, a set of 25 iPads, smartboards, videoing students teaching and the College has a dedicated education classroom to support innovative technology tools. Faculty also has come together around Proficiency-based education and are seen as leaders at the University for implementing this approach to education.

Modeling Best Professional Practices in:

Scholarship

It is very clear that teaching is the number one priority for the University. One faculty asserted that the previous President really emphasized UMPI being a teaching college with the primary responsibility of faculty being engaging in quality teaching. While there is money available to support faculty on scholarship, there is also a recognition that the College of Education's faculty have very heavy teaching, advising and service loads that do not give them much time to pursue scholarship agendas. The Faculty Handbook does recognize that different departments have different expectations for scholarship and each department should make its own judgements as to what sustained scholarship looks like in their respective fields. For example, the two Associate Professors have been published in *International Journal of Special Education*, *Journal of Special Education*, *Journal of Educational Research* as well as book chapters and international publications.

Service

The Education faculty are very connected to schools and the greater community. One of the more powerful connections comes through their involvement in the Central Aroostook Council of

Education (CACE). The primary goal of this organization is to provide high quality professional development, strengthen pre-service education, and develop a collegial PK-16 relationship amongst the northern Maine regional education constituencies. The College faculty are involved in this coalition that supports proficiency based learning, provides professional development, and serve on board of directors. The Superintendent of RSU#39 stated that this is a very important partnership that directly impacts students and teachers in the region and UMPI's leadership is imperative to the success of the region through this organization. In addition to this partnership the faculty conduct a lot of community-outreach with area schools, for example, they coordinate a Math Family Night, Science Family Night and coordinate a Mock Election.

Evaluation of Professional Education Faculty Performance

There are a number of ways that the College evaluates faculty both formatively and summatively. Formative assessments come in the form of course evaluations and Annual Professional Development Plans. Course Evaluations are given at the end of each semester and administered through the IDEA course evaluation software that is used system wide. Each semester faculty get together to discuss these evaluations as they relate to their teaching overall. Each faculty also has to incorporate a reflection on these evaluations as part of the narrative in their portfolio that is part of the peer review process. One student did bring up that while the quantitative parts of these evaluations are anonymous that when a comment is made they have to sign their name. These raised a concern about how true these evaluations actually are and also if there is a place to really give honest feedback. Another student wondered what actually happened to these evaluations after they filled them out. Another formative assessment is the Annual Professional Development Plans. This is completed yearly through the College.

The Peer Review Committee process is a summative assessment of faculty. This includes a portfolio that is developed with a variety of materials that support success including peer observations and observations by the Peer Review chair. The Portfolio consists of documents such as vita, service record, syllabi, course evaluations, letters of support, and observations. This portfolio is reviewed by a committee and recommendations for advancement come from Chair of Peer Review, Chair of Education, Provost, and President. According to the faculty handbook tenured full professors are to be evaluated every four (4) years and tenured associate professors are to be evaluated every two (2) years unless more frequently if requested by the unit member and tenured faculty. Non-tenured faculty shall be reviewed on an annual basis.

Facilitation of Professional Development

There is a lot of support for faculty development—most of it done by the Instructional Design Specialist and the Professional Development Advisory Committee. Some of the professional development supports are as follows:

- *One-to-one instructional support:* Faculty can arrange with the Instructional Designer to work on areas that they would like more support with (things like student engagement, creating rubrics, implementing PBE). This is a service offered to the whole University to support faculty instructional practices.
- *Small group support:* Events like Lunch and Learn which occur during common times and on topics that reflect the needs of the faculty (again formative assessment, rubrics, PBE, diversity and culture events) support faculty development.

- *Pineapple Chart*: Faculty are encouraged to open their doors to share instructional practices with each other in an informal manner.
- *Book Clubs*: There are also informal book clubs around strengthening instructional practice.
- *Davis Grant*: There also is a Davis grant to support Professional Development—including summer institutes and also collaborative professional development with K-12 and higher education around Proficiency-Based Education.

Summary

Overall the College of Education is a very close knit department. They have a lot of camaraderie, they are supportive, student-centered (high touch, student focused), and very collaborative as a faculty. They have worked hard to move their college and the university to embrace a Proficiency Based Education (PBE) model. They have gotten much support for faculty in terms of professional development—especially around PBE.

B. Recommendations.

1. The department prides itself on being accessible and student centered. They are very responsive to the community and committed to staying current in the educational climate. That said, they are stretched very thin in terms of load and personnel. While they should be commended for being strategic about faculty lines and the use of adjuncts they are being asked to do too much. In order to bring the department to full capacity and support the mission of the unit we recommend that the administration maintain current lines and also hire another full time faculty based on identified needs of the unit.

C. Commendations.

1. The unit is to be commended for its ability to plan for, design, actively implement, and continually develop a 21st century vision of quality proficiency based assessment practices while still remaining accessible and meaningfully involved in the academic growth of their students. This represents a lot of work and reorienting the department. The faculty have been provided strong professional development and benefited from collaborative relationship with school districts.

D. Review Team Decision.

This Standard is *MET*

Standard Six – Unit Governance and Resources

The unit has the leadership, authority, budget, personnel, facilities and resources, including information technology resources, for the preparation of candidates to meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

A. Rationale for the Decision/Recommendations.

Unit Leadership and Authority

The University of Maine at Presque Isle is one of seven autonomous campuses in the University of Maine System (UMS). The University of Maine System Board of Trustees has full legal responsibility and authority for the campuses in the UMS, appoints the UMS Chancellor and campus presidents, as well as Boards of Visitors unique to each campus. The Board of Visitors serves as an advisory Board to the President of the University and an advocate for the Board of Trustees. The UMS Chancellor is the administrator responsible for program and budget control, public accountability, system-wide planning, and collaboration for academic and financial affairs, resources, physical facilities, legislative affairs, and public relations. The Chancellor recommends appointment of the campus President and Chief Academic Officer to the Board of Trustees. At UMPI, the President is served by a Cabinet that meets weekly and is comprised of the Campus Business Officer, Senior HR Business Partner, Executive Director of Advancement, and Campus Operations Officer.

Three distinct colleges comprise UMPI: Arts and Sciences, Education, and Professional Programs, with Education being the largest college. UMPI is currently experiencing an interim period of leadership. UMPI's organizational chart demonstrates that the three colleges are chaired by two chairpersons; however, because UMPI currently has an interim President/Provost (24 month appointment to end summer 2018), each of the two chairs are currently serving as Deans. One Dean serves both the College of Education and the College of Professional Programs, with an Assistant Chair of Education. The College of Education has authority to act independently, with approval of the Chair (currently Dean) of the College of Education. Five faculty committees exist in support of the academic governance of the University, including: Faculty Development Committee; Faculty Evaluation Committee (unique to each college); Curriculum Committee; Academic Standards Committee; and Academic Appeals Board. Education faculty meet formally as a department every two weeks, and there is Education faculty representation on each of the five faculty committees.

In speaking with members of administration, public school leaders, support staff, and students, it is clear that Education faculty are not only well-respected on campus and in the field of education, but also leaders in the proficiency-based movement on campus at UMPI. Students speak highly of faculty responsiveness, receptivity, care, and concern for their needs and success. Education faculty have administrative support and support staff in maintaining their program and the new TK-20 assessment system facilitating the success of their students, and they communicate and collaborate with K-12 administrators and teachers to design and implement the

program. Funding for the College of Education appears to be level with other Colleges on the campus.

Personnel

The College of Education is comprised of one Chairperson who is currently serving as Dean; one Assistant Chair; four full-time, tenure track faculty members; one full-time placement coordinator; one full time non-tenure instructor (physical education); regular adjuncts (either employed by UMPI in different positions, or practitioner faculty from local schools); and one administrative assistant. Additionally, one full time professional advisor serves the College of Education, with funding through the professional administrative budget. The role of the professional advisor compliments the faculty advisors, who have very large advising loads in addition to teaching, service, and scholarship responsibilities.

All full-time faculty are responsible for teaching, scholarship, and service, as well as significant advising loads. The regular teaching assignment at UMPI for full-time faculty is 12 credit hours per semester, though overload teaching assignments are not uncommon during the semester or during the summer months. The Assistant Chair receives one three-credit course release for this administrative role, while the Deans receive a full four-course release per semester. Course capacity is generally 12 students for upper courses, but does vary depending on faculty rank and student need. Faculty supervision of students engaged in fieldwork is compensated by release time, stipend, or overload pay; for faculty and local K-12 administrators, faculty engagement with practitioners and pre-service teachers in the field is a priority. One faculty member will begin a phased retirement at the end of the fall 2016 semester; at this point in time, a plan for succession has not been developed.

Unit Budget

The College of Education has its own budget, which includes printing and copying; supplies and materials; in- and out-of-state travel; audio-visual and computer equipment under \$5000; maintenance of copiers; and postage and delivery. Through an Activity Fee charged to freshmen in EDU 152 (first semester of freshman year), student binders, t-shirts, fingerprinting and cards, first attempt at Praxis Core tests, and access to TK-20 online system (7-year access) is covered. If the College has needs beyond the base budget, then the Provost has discretion to provide additional funding. Funding is available for overload teaching assignments and adjunct faculty, though the Dean is encouraged to maintain documentation of these needs. The two campus Deans are given latitude to determine their own budgets based on their program needs, with the understanding that there is oversight by the Chief Business Officer should those needs become significantly unbalanced.

Unit Facilities and Resources

The College of Education maintains dedicated classroom space and faculty offices. Class space is equipped with SmartBoard technology, an overhead projector, and a myriad of children's books and educational materials. Students have access to computer labs and iPads. The faculty and candidates also have full access to campus IT support.

According to the Chief Business Officer, departmental funding is level across the three colleges at UMPI and faculty across the university are allocated \$1100 toward professional development each year. Recently, funds have been used for an overnight trip to visit RSU 2 in Hallowell, as well as attendance at conferences. Faculty have received significant professional development over the past year related to the development and implementation of the proficiency-based system, and programs have collaborated to map out curriculum and standards that have become PLOs and SLOs.

For technological needs, those related to the Education Program would be covered by the departmental budget, while Computer Services is responsible for more general faculty technology needs. The Library maintains a budget to purchase materials for each academic program on campus, and Admissions covers the cost for advertising and marketing. Technological needs are also met through the University of Maine System, or campus-specific, IT services, with some annual student fees allocated to the campus for technological support, including the Blackboard course management system that is used in all courses. TK-20 support is provided by a staff member who is appointed to facilitate this support at 75% of her workload.

The UMPI Library is located within the Center for Innovative Learning, though the Children's Collection and Education Resource Materials are located in the College of Education's dedicated classroom space so that faculty and students can easily access the materials for use during classes.

Summary

In summary, we find that UMPI has appropriate governance—assuming the return of designated governance structure once the interim organization has stabilized— and facilities for the College of Education at UMPI to meet expectations.

B. Recommendations.

NONE

C. Commendations

1. The requirement of First Year Experience of EDU 152 allows students to pay an activity fee that can be charged to financial aid and covers their binder, t-shirt, fingerprinting and card, seven-year access to TK-20, and first attempt at Praxis Core Assessments. By requiring this fee, students need not worry about how to pay for these various program and MDOE requirements, and because the Professional Advisor is embedded into the coursework, students also receive her support and assistance in registering for fingerprinting and Praxis.

D. Review Team Decision.

This Standard is *MET*.

IV. Recommendation to State Board of Education

The Review Team recommends that the University of Maine, Presque Isle Teacher Education Program be granted full five-year approval by the Maine State Board of Education from Fall 2016 through Fall 2021.

V. List of individuals Interviewed and Sources of Evidence

A. INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED:

University of Maine, Presque Isle Faculty and Staff

Interim President and Provost	Dr. Raymond Rice
Dean of Professional Programs and College of Education	Barbara Blackstone
Associate Professor of Social Studies Education	Dr. Tomasz Herzog
Associate Professor of Special Education	Dr. William Breton
Assistant Professor	Wendi Malenfant
Lecturer in Physical Education	Leo Saucier
Lecturer in Physical Education	Alan Gordon
Director of Student Teaching and Field Experience	Jack Stewart
Instructional Designer	Alana Margeson
Professional Advisor	Shara Page
Interim Registrar and Director of Advising	Lorelei Lock
Dean of Students	Jim Stepp
TK-20 Unit Administrator	Linda McLaughlin
Chief Business Officer	Benjamin Shaw
Director of Student Success	Vanessa Pearson
Director of Admissions	Erin Benson

Director of 21 st Century Afterschool Program	Halina Herzog
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UMPI Students and Alumni

UMPI Student Teacher	Lance Albair
UMPI Student Teacher	Lydia Streinz
UMPI Student Teacher	Sarah Sullivan
UMPI Student Senior	Katie McKenna
UMPI Student Freshman	Abby Boice
UMPI Student Freshman	Sarah Draper
UMPI Student Freshman	Martin Egan
UMPI Student Senior	Misty Stewart
UMPI Student Post-Bacc	Chelsea Briggs
UMPI Student Sophomore	Alex DesRuisseaux
UMPI Alumni	Danielle Grenier
UMPI Alumni	Molly Brown
UMPI Nontraditional student	Melanie Junkins

Area Cooperating Teachers and Administrators

Superintendent RSU #39	Tim Doak
Curriculum Director RSU #39	Jane McCall
Cooperating Teacher	April Belyea
Cooperating Teacher at Caribou High School	Allison Ladner

B. SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Standard 1

Sources of Evidence:

- Summaries of assessments of candidates, including those at entry, at critical points in candidate development, and prior to program completion currently being used.
- Candidate proficiencies expected upon completion of programs and candidate work samples.
- Follow-up studies of graduates.
- Data on performance of graduates.
- Records of current performance assessments of candidate progress and summary results.
- Most recent report prepared for state approval, and state findings.
- Assessments of expected candidate proficiencies.

Interviews:

- The dean and chair of the professional education unit
- The director of field experiences/clinical practice
- Unit and Arts & Sciences Faculty
- Candidates at initial and advanced levels
- Counselors and advisors to education candidates
- Graduates
- Principals and cooperating teachers of schools where candidates complete field experiences

Standard 2

Sources of Evidence

- Assessment system plans & descriptions.
- Samples of assessment measures used to ensure that candidates are ready to progress through the program and enter the profession.
- Unit evaluations.
- Results of assessments and evaluations.

Interviews:

- Alana Margeson, Professional Staff/Adjunct Faculty
- Barbara Blackstone, Dean of COE/ Professional Programs
- Leigh Belair, Co-Director MLT Program
- Jason Johnston, Dean of Arts and Sciences
- Vanessa Pearson, Director of Student Success
- Wendy Malenfant, Assistant Professor of Education
- Danelle Grenier, Alumna
- Linda McLaughlin, PK-20 Unit Administrator
- Shara Page, Professional Advisor
- Alex DesRuisseaux, Student
- Melanie Junkins, Student

Standard 3

Sources of Evidence:

- Self-Study Report
- Student work samples
- Cooperating Teacher/Field Supervisor Assessment Data
- Field Placement Site Visits
- Course Syllabi

Interviews:

- Administrators (Provost, Dean, Dean of Students, Directors, Department Chair)
- Faculty & Staff
- Students (First Year through Student Teachers, post baccalaureate)
- Graduates
- Principals and cooperating teachers of schools where candidates complete field experiences

Standard 4

Sources of Evidence:

- Self-Report
- Course Syllabi
- Demographic Documents

Interviews:

- President/Provost
- Dean of Students
- College of Education Faculty
- Director of Field Experiences
- Director of Student Success
- Director of Student Advising
- Director of Admissions
- Director of 21st Century Afterschool Program
- Students
- Graduate

Standard 5

Sources of Evidence:

- Samples of faculty publications and other scholarly activities.
- Peer Review Binders
- Faculty Vita
- Faculty Handbook
- Faculty qualifications and assignments
- Faculty evaluations
- Professional development activities

Interviews:

- The dean or chair of the professional education unit
- Unit faculty
- Principals and cooperating teachers
- Candidates

Standard Six

Sources of Evidence:

- UMPI Organizational Chart (dated 08/05/2015)

Interviews:

- Raymond J. Rice, Interim President and Provost
- Barbara J. Blackstone, Dean of Professional Programs and College of Education
- Alex DesRuisseaux, Student
- Lorelei Locke, Interim Registrar and Director of Advising
- Benjamin Shaw, Chief Business Officer
- Tim Doak, Superintendent RSU #39
- Jane McCall, Assistant Superintendent & Curriculum Coordinator RSU #39
- Danelle Grenier, Special Education Teacher
- Melanie Junkins, Nontraditional student
- Erin Benson, Director of Admissions
- Shara Page, Professional Advisor
- Jason Johnston, Dean of Arts & Sciences
- Dr. William Breton, Associate Professor of Special Education